

clear and very useful, a real compendium of valuable information for the teacher and student alike.

I would have further appreciated the book if a hard bound copy would be available for about the same price as the current soft bound version. I would also observe that the small graphics used to introduce some of the chapters did not measure up to the content of the book. These quibbles aside, the book is a valuable asset for those who want to both understand and witness to the religions we find in our world today.

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*More than Meets the Ear: Discovering the Hidden Contexts of Old Testament Conversations*, by Victor H. Matthews. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008. Pp. xii + 198. ISBN 978-0-8028-0384-9. US\$ 25.00.

This book begins with an important preface by the author in which he explains that the book aims to focus on the embedded dialogue in biblical stories, utilizing "the method and techniques current in sociology, critical geography, socio-linguistics, and social psychology" (p. vi). The objective of the book is to equip the reader to "step more effectively into the world of ancient Israelite conversations" and make the written text "become living social artifacts of their or the author's time and social environment" (p. viii).

In each of the five chapters which follow the brief list of abbreviations (pp. xi-xii), Matthews attempts to briefly introduce a method from the social sciences or communication theory and then apply it to a particular biblical narrative in order to demonstrate its usefulness to the biblical reader.

Chapter one spends time explaining some of the current methods developed within the fields of social psychology and sociology. Matthews draws heavily on the theoretical groundwork of leaders within the field such as Gilles Fauconnier, Maxwell Atkinson, Mark Knapp and John Daly, and then goes on to explain the use of embedded dialogue as a way of engaging the biblical text. The author focuses on the "formal speeches and debates, casual conversations, and commercial transactions" (p. 1) within the OT narratives. These embedded dialogues are included in the narrations for a purpose and uncovering both the purpose and exploring the choice of words, as well as the situation and culture in which the dialogue takes place gives the reader of the biblical text more opportunities to fully understand the communicative intent of the biblical author. Chapter two further develops the application of the methods described in chapter one with an extended exegesis of the story of Judah and Tamar found in Gen 38. Particular attention is given to the structural analysis drawing on cognitive linguistics and mental space

theory. Mental space theory explores the position a speaker takes within a conversation. This is “based not only on what is said, but on the nuances of the words, the emotional and physical situation, and the reaction of the other participants in the conversation” (p. 53).

In chapter three conversation analysis is further explored using the work of Harvey Sacks and Erving Goffman to formulate methods used in the exegetical study of David and Michal found in 2 Sam 6 and the story of David, Nabal and Abigail found in 1 Sam 25. Conversation analysis assumes that when people talk they are not only giving information, their thoughts or particular knowledge, but they are also “communicating their identities and their relative positions, and they are engaging in active social interaction...the process therefore provides a key to the study of their society through its forms of conversation” (p. 68). Chapter four turns to public discourse and uses positioning theory to illuminate the confrontation between King Ahab and the prophet Micaiah in 1 Kgs 22, examining the strategies used to attempt to intimidate or challenge. Positioning theory attempts to “examine the varying skills of individuals as well as the ethics of manipulating others” (p. 104). Although the word manipulate holds in itself negative connotations, Matthews points out that all communication is manipulative in the sense that the speaker wishes to change something—the physical environment, or the thoughts and perceptions of the hearers. This knowledge is fraught with moral implications “since those who have the power to position others may do so for personal gain or glory or for altruistic or perceived ‘greatest good’ purposes” (p. 105). In the final chapter the author draws on the work of urban geographers such as Edward Soja and Setha Low as well as psychologists Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Levinson to explore spatial context as a cognitive factor in social interaction. Here the focus is on “the physical and perceived qualities of particular space that provide both opportunity for and restraints on speech” (p. 131). Particular attention is given to the differences between public and private space within different cultural settings. Recognizing these spaces is of vital importance in understanding dialogue as what one is free to say and how one’s words depend largely on whether you are in the privacy of your home with only family members present or on national TV making an inauguration speech. Matthews then presents an interesting comparative analysis of the use of space in Isa 7 and 36 and Baruch and his scroll in Jer 36. The final chapter is followed by a very useful glossary of technical terms (pp. 156–68). The 19-page current bibliography (pp. 169–87) serves as a useful introduction to the most important literature in the social sciences and communication theory. A subject index, as well as a brief Scripture index, is also included. The Scripture index reflects the volume’s focus on the Old Testament, but a few New Testament, deuterocanonical works and extrabiblical texts are also included.

Even though this book introduces numerous methodologies and precisely explains theories which are normally new ground for the biblical scholar, the book proves to be extremely readable and one soon gets the feeling that one is uncovering a treasure trove of new tools. The volume is highly didactic with its well-designed layout, and numerous insets and text-boxes which highlight information or provide background and definition of technical terms. Each chapter ends with several thought provoking questions. Matthews uses numerous OT examples to illustrate the various methodologies, but it would have perhaps even been more useful to see a particular biblical section interpreted using several of the methodologies, in order to see how the text itself could benefit and not simply serve as an example. Given the number of new concepts and methodologies introduced, more help could be given to a biblical exegete on how to match a method for a biblical text in order to gain the most insight. Perhaps something like this could have been included in a final chapter as one is left with the feeling that the volume ends rather abruptly without connections being drawn between the different chapters. A few other small features could also add to the value of the book, such as, area subheadings in the bibliography. While the list of abbreviations shows an impressive use of journals from the area of biblical studies, no journals from any of the other fields are included. This would have been helpful to biblical scholars interested in digging deeper into a new field. The volume aims at the "serious student of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament who is willing to stretch beyond traditional exegetical methods" (p. x). This groundbreaking book is a wonderful addition to interdisciplinary exegetical analysis. While this book will be of tremendous use in the classroom it can also be used in private study. After having read this volume one will not be able to look at OT conversations in the same way knowing that there is so much "more than meets the ear."

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*E. J. Waggoner: From the Physician of Good News to the Agent of Division*, by Woodrow W. Whidden II. Hagerstown: Review & Herald, 2008. Pp. 401. ISBN 978-08-280-1982-8. Hardcover. US\$ 22.99.

This work was planned as part of a Review and Herald series by different authors on important figures of Adventist history. There is a work on James White, a co-founder of the church, entitled *Innovator and Overcomer of Difficulties*. Another, on Joseph Bates, is titled *The True Founder of Seventh-day Adventism*, considering the man who brought James and Ellen G. White, and the entire circle of believers in the 1844 message, to the Sabbath truth